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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/098,688	03/15/2002	Shunpei Yamazaki	SEL 308	5173

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EXAMINER

CHEN, BRET P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1762

DATE MAILED: 09/14/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/098,688	Applicant(s) YAMAZAKI ET AL.	
	Examiner B. Chen	Art Unit 1762	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 September 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-94 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-45 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 58-73, 77-80, 84-87 and 91-94 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 46-57, 74-76, 81-83 and 88-90 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 March 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-94 are pending in this application, which is an RCE of Serial Number 10/098688. Claims 1-45 have been withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a nonelected invention.

The examiner contacted the applicant's attorney on September 10, 2004 to inquire if a preliminary amendment had been sent in and was informed that there were no preliminary amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 46-57, 74-67, 81-83, 88-90 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hemsath et al. (5,997,286). Hemsath discloses a thermal treating process with a recirculation plenum (col.5 lines 4-13) in which the plenum 30 introduces a stream at the upstream end 31 and is in fluid communication with a downstream end 26 (col.7 line 64 – col.8

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line 8). The fluid is recirculated (col.8 lines 8-36). A heater can be utilized (lines 17-21), as well as a heat exchanger and coolers (lines 21-23). The fluid can be an oxidizing gas or a non-oxidizing gas and a second chamber can be utilized (col.12 lines 21-29). A semiconductor film is taught in col.2 lines 23-57 as well as a orifice plate (col.9 lines 17-54). However, the reference remains silent on the location of the heating means.

It is noted that the reference utilizes the heating means to heat the fluid and the substrate as noted above. One skilled in the art would realize that the location of the heating means is irrelevant as long as it heats. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to place the heating means in the upstream side of the chamber with the expectation of obtaining equivalent results and in the absence of a showing of unexpected results.

The limitations of claims 46-57, 74-67, 88-90 have been addressed above.

In claims 81-83, the applicant requires a gas flow perpendicular to the substrate. The reference clearly teaches of flowing a gas over the substrate. To flow the gas perpendicular would have been obvious with the expectation of obtaining similar results.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 58-73, 77-80, 84-87, and 91-94 are allowed.


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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to B. Chen whose telephone number is (571) 272-1417. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30am - 4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Shrive Beck can be reached on (571) 272-1415. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Bc
9/11/04


BRET CHEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER